



NEWSLETTER

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF THE MILITARY



RAPID CITY BECOMES PURPLE HEART CITY

Ken Teunissen, state commander for the Dakotas Department of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, was in Rapid City this week to present the city with "Purple Heart City" signs. Rapid City Mayor Allender presented a resolution honoring all Purple Heart Medal recipients and declaring Rapid City as a "Purple Heart City."

The resolution stated, "Rapid City supports the mission of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, and therefore desires to be designated as a Purple Heart City in honor of the sacrifices our Purple Heart recipients have made in defending our freedoms."



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VABHHCS TO HOST VETERANS TOWN HALL

The VA Black Hills Health Care System and STG International, Inc. (STGI) will host an informational Town Hall on Thursday April 18th from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm (CT) at the Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center in Pierre. All veterans and their families are invited to attend.

On April 1, 2019, STGI assumed management of the Pierre VA Clinic, providing primary care services to veterans in the clinic on 1601 North Harrison in Pierre. At the Town Hall, STGI and VA leaders will provide information and take questions about the care and services available through the clinic and discuss plans for a new clinic location.

The Pierre Community Based Outpatient Clinic is part of the VA Black Hills Health Care System which provides patient-centered care to over 19,000 veterans living in a five-state region.

FUNDING FROM GROW SD

Sherri Skjonsberg, project coordinator for GROW South Dakota reminds us they have funding available for veterans to help pay for rent, security deposits, fuel payments, and utilities. Here is the link to access the application form—<https://www.growsd.org/about-us/resource-library/p/item/3030/emergency-services-application>. Copies of bills and proof of income must accompany each application form.



Grow South Dakota celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2017 and deployed more than \$5 million in down payment assistance to hundreds of homebuyers in less than two years.

For more information, please contact Sherri at 605.698.7654 x 134 or email her at sherri@growsd.org.

SAVE THE DATE

The vintage singing trio, "The Beverly Belles," will perform a concert in Sioux City, Iowa as a fundraiser for Midwest Honor Flight. This is the second annual Midwest Honor Flight Hangar Dance!

Tickets and more information to follow soon. You won't want to miss this event to honor our heroes! The Beverly Belles' "Victory Showtime"

concert will feature popular tunes from the 1930's, 1940's and 1950's in the tradition of the Andrews Sisters, with voices and harmonies, choreography and banter. More information can be found at:

https://www.facebook.com/pg/TheBeverlyBelles/events/?ref=page_internal



MIDWEST HONOR FLIGHT

On May 7, over 80 veterans from Northwest Iowa, South Dakota, and Southwest Minnesota will be traveling through our nation's Capitol - Washington, D.C. Participating Midwest Honor Flight Veterans will leave Sioux Falls Regional Airport on Tuesday, May 7, early in the morning at 0545 and fly to Reagan National Airport (DCA) to visit Arlington and Washington D.C. The tour will consist of a visit to The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier to witness the Changing of the Guard located in Arlington National Cemetery, Iwo Jima, Air Force Memorials, Navy Memorials, and the World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam War Memorials.

Midwest Honor Flight is asking for YOUR HELP to make their Welcome Home something special when they arrive back in Sioux

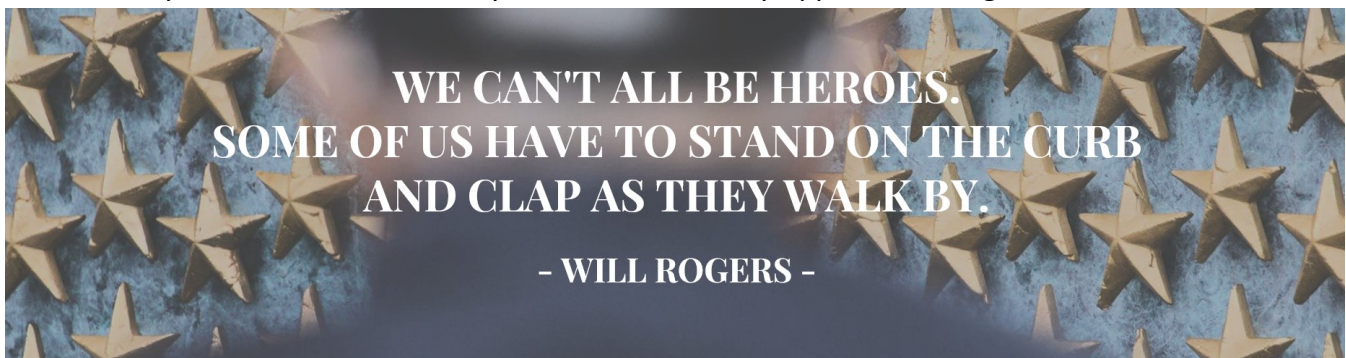
Falls and are escorted from the Sioux Falls Regional Airport to the Sioux Falls Convention Center Arena. They encourage people to make a poster or two, and join the troops at the Sioux Falls Convention Center Arena to welcome these Ameri-



can Heroes home from their Final Tour with Honor! Let's fill the space to capacity to show these veterans from WWII, Korea, and Vietnam just how much we appreciate their service to OUR United States of America! Doors open at 7:45 pm and welcome home ceremony starts at 9:00 pm

Upcoming fundraisers for Midwest Honor Flight are as follows:

- Saturday, April 27 – Remedy Brewery "Honor Flights" Special Event
- Tuesday, May 7 – Mission 4 Welcome Home – Sioux Falls Arena
- Sunday, May 26 – Mitchell Veteran's Golf Outing
- Sunday, May 26 – 5th Annual Thunder on the Missouri (South Sioux City)
- Saturday, June 8 – Sioux City Bandits Military Appreciation Night
- Monday, August 26 - Sioux Falls Barrel House Fundraiser (all day 10%)
- Tuesday, September 24 - Mission 5 Welcome Home – Sioux Falls Arena
- Saturday, October 12 - Mission 6 Welcome Home - Sioux Falls Arena (Pending Funding)
- Saturday, November 2 - 2nd Annual Hangar Dance ft. the Beverly Belles
- Saturday, November 9 - Sioux City Musketeers Military Appreciation Night



NCA PARTNERS WITH CARRY THE LOAD

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that its National Cemetery Administration (NCA) is partnering with [Carry The Load](#), a nonprofit organization that provides active ways to connect Americans to the sacrifices made daily by the U.S. military, veterans, first responders and their families.

NCA will participate in Carry The Load's Memorial May awareness campaign, which covers 40 states, leading up to Memorial Day 2019.

Participants will march or ride bicycles in an 11,500-mile national relay along three routes — East Coast, West Coast and Midwest — handing off an American flag every few miles. Each participant walks or rides to “carry the load” for a deceased military service member or veteran, remembering them and honoring their sacrifice. Twenty-six VA national cemeteries in 17 states will serve as relay points for Carry The Load memorial marches.

“The VA is delighted to partner with Carry The Load in this important initiative of honoring those who sacrificed for our freedom,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “It’s a mindset that every one of VA’s employees emulates. And nowhere is the sacrifice made by our veterans more evident than in our national cemeteries.”

In conjunction with the Carry The Load national relay, each VA national cemetery along the three routes will host a brief ceremony unveiling a commemorative plaque dedicated to America’s fallen Veterans and their families. To view the list of the 26 participating VA national cemeteries and the dates and times they will host the Carry The Load relay and “Tribute to the Fallen and Their Families” plaque dedication ceremonies, [download the calendar](#).

The VA operates 136 national cemeteries and 33 soldiers’ lots and monument sites in 40 states and Puerto Rico.

For veterans not buried in a VA national cemetery, the VA provides headstones, markers or medallions to commemorate their service. Information on VA burial benefits is available from local VA national cemetery offices, online at: <https://www.va.gov/burials-memorials/> or by calling VA regional offices toll-free at 800-827-1000.

To make burial arrangements at any open VA national cemetery at the time of need, call the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at 800-535-1117.



OUR MISSION

To provide an active way to honor and celebrate our nation's heroes by connecting Americans to the sacrifices made by Military, Veterans, First Responders and their families.

JOIN US IN ROCK RAPIDS



SUNDAY, APRIL 28 / 10 AM - 1 PM



PANCAKE FEED

Forster Community Center
404 Main Street
Rock Rapids, IA

**FREE WILL
DONATION FOR:**



**MIDWEST
HONOR FLIGHT**



**HOSTED BY THE
ROCK RAPIDS
AMERICAN LEGION
& VFW POSTS**

VA EMERGENCY MENTAL HEALTH CARE

As part of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) efforts to provide the best mental health care access possible, the VA is reminding veterans that it offers all veterans same-day access to emergency mental health care at any VA health care facility across the country.

"Providing same-day 24/7 access to mental health crisis intervention and support for veterans, service members and their families is our top clinical priority," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "It's important that all veterans, their family and friends know that help is easily available."

The VA's Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention is the national leader in making high-quality mental health care and suicide prevention resources available to Veterans through a full spectrum of outpatient, inpatient and telemental health services.

Additionally, the VA has developed the [National Strategy for Preventing Veteran Suicide](#), which reflects the department's vision for a coordinated effort to prevent suicide among all service members and veterans. This strategy maintains the VA's focus on high-risk individuals in health care settings, while also adopting a broad public health approach to suicide prevention.

The VA has supported numerous veterans and has the capacity to assist more. In fiscal year (FY) 2018, 1.7 million veterans received Veterans Health Administration (VHA) mental health services. These patients received more than 84,000 psychiatric hospital stays, about 41,700 residential stays and more than 21 million outpatient encounters.

Nationally, in the first quarter of FY 2019, 90% of new patients completed an appointment in a mental health clinic within 30 days of scheduling an appointment, and 96.8% of established patients completed a mental health appointment within 30 days of the day they requested. For FY 2018, 48% of initial, in-person Primary Care — Mental Health Integration (PC-MHI) encounters were on the same day as the patient's PC encounter. During the first quarter of FY 2019, 51% of initial, in-person PC-MHI encounters were on the same day as the patient's PC encounter.

Veterans in crisis – or those concerned about one – should call the Veterans Crisis Line at 800-273-8255

and press 1, send a text message to 838255 or chat online at [VeteransCrisisLine.net](#).



Suicide Prevention

Welcome to VA Black Hills Health Care System and thank you for Choosing VA

To learn more about VA Black Hills programs and services you are invited to join us for a **Veteran Orientation Program**.

You have questions about VA and we have answers.

This short program will help you understand how to access health care, easily navigate VA systems, and receive all of the benefits you've earned.

Classes are scheduled from **4:30pm to 6:30pm** on the third Thursday of each month at rotating locations



You choose the date and location that works for you. No registration is required.

April 18, 2019 in Building 145, Room 108 at Fort Meade

May 16, 2019 In Room 133 at the Rapid City CBOC

June 20, 2019 in Building 53, Room 102 at Hot Springs

VA

U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health
Administration
Black Hills
Health Care System



Choose **VA**

UPCOMING EVENTS

Apr 18—VABHHCS Town Hall—Ramkota Hotel (920 W. Sioux Avenue)—Pierre 2:00 pm (CT)
Apr 18—VABHHCS Veterans Orientation Program (Building 145—Room 108) Fort Meade—4:30 pm (MT)
Apr 19—State Offices Closed
Apr 20—SFVAHCS Whole Health Class—Sioux Falls Vet Center (3200 W. 49th Street) - 9:00 am—11:00 am (CT)
Apr 22—State Offices Closed
Apr 28—Pancake Feed for Midwest Honor Flight—Forster Community Center (404 Main Street) - Rock Rapids, IA—
10:00 am—1:00 pm (CT)
May 7—Midwest Honor Flight Welcome Home Ceremony—Sioux Falls Convention Center—7:45 pm (CT)
May 7—SDDVA Mini Conference—TREA (1981 Centre Street)—Rapid City—10:00 am—3:00 pm (MT)
May 8—SDDVA Mini Conference—Post 8 American Legion (520 S. Pierre Street)—Pierre—10:00 am—3:00 pm (CT)
May 9—SDDVA Mini Conference—VFW (3601 S. Minnesota Avenue)—Sioux Falls—10:00 am—3:00 pm (CT)
May 14—Bill Casper's Annual WW II Luncheon—TREA—Rapid City
May 16—VABHHCS Veterans Orientation Program (Room 133) Rapid City CBOC—4:30 pm (MT)
May 17—Veterans Honor Concert—State Veterans Home—Hot Springs—2:00 pm (MT)
May 17-19—DAV Convention—Hilton Garden Inn (5300 S. Grand Circle) —Sioux Falls
May 18—SFVAHCS Whole Health Class—Sioux Falls Vet Center (3200 W. 49th Street) - 9:00 am—11:00 am (CT)
May 27—MJFSVH Memorial Day Car Show—Hot Springs—2:00 pm (MT)
Jun 6-9—American Legion State Convention—Sioux Falls Convention Center
Jun 8—Department of SD Marine Corps League State Convention—American Legion Post 8—Pierre—10:00 am (CT)
Jun 13-16—VFW State Convention—Dakota State University—Madison
Jun 15—SFVAHCS Whole Health Class—Sioux Falls Vet Center (3200 W. 49th Street) - 9:00 am—11:00 am (CT)
Jun 20—VABHHCS Veterans Orientation Program (Building 53—Room 102) Hot Springs—4:30 pm (MT)
Jul 17—South Dakota Veterans Council—PVA Headquarters—Sioux Falls—10:00 am (CT)
July 20-24—National VFW Convention—Orlando, FL
Jul 20—SFVAHCS Whole Health Class—Sioux Falls Vet Center (3200 W. 49th Street) - 9:00 am—11:00 am (CT)
Aug 3-6—DAV National Convention—Orlando, FL
Aug 17—SFVAHCS Whole Health Class—Sioux Falls Vet Center (3200 W. 49th Street) - 9:00 am—11:00 am (CT)
Aug 29—Veterans Day at the Fair
Aug 26-29—SDDVA Benefit School
Sep 21—SFVAHCS Whole Health Class—Sioux Falls Vet Center (3200 W. 49th Street) - 9:00 am—11:00 am (CT)
Sep 21—Davison County Veterans Wellness and Benefit Fair—Mitchell Corn Palace—8:00 am—4:30 pm (CT)

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